DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 191 489 IR 008 745

AUTHOR Pritchard, Alan; Payne, Philip
TITLE Part-Time Students: Their Use of a Polytechnic Library. LLRS Publications.
INSTITUTION City of London Polytechnic (England). Library and Learning Resources Service.
PUB DATE Apr 80
NOTE 43p.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Libraries; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Information Utilization; Library Surveys; *Part Time Students; *Use Studies

ABSTRACT

Part-time students at City of London Polytechnic were surveyed regarding their use of the library. This report explains the methodology, presents survey results, and summarizes conclusions of the study. Analysis is based on a response rate of approximately 26 percent of the questionnaires which were distributed to a sample of students. In addition to characterizing users, the results measure use of the library according to academic department, type and grade of course, day and location of class, and by length of travelling time. Responses also identify additional services desired by part-time students, reasons for not using the library, and the extent of use of other libraries. Contained in the appendices are a copy of the questionnaire and relevant correspondence. (SW)

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PART-TIME STUDENTS: their use of a Polytechnic library

Alan Pritchard
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LLRS PUBLICATIONS
APRIL 1980

IR 008 745

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British Library CIP data

PRITCHARD, Alan
Part-time students, their use of a polytechnic library.
1. City of London Polytechnic. Library
2. Libraries, University and college - England - London - Use studies
3. Libraries, University and college - Great Britain - Use studies
4. Libraries and students - England - London
5. Libraries and students - Great Britain
6. Students, Part-time - England - London
7. Students, Part-time - Great Britain
I. Title II. Payne, Philip, b. 1952
025.5 Z792.C59

ISBN 0 904264-48-3

LLRS Publications,
City of London Polytechnic,
Calcutta House,
Old Castle Street,
London, E1 7NT
England

PART-TIME STUDENTS:

THEIR USE OF A POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY

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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire survey of part-time students on their use of the library was carried out at City of London Polytechnic at the beginning of 1979. Approximately 26% of the 2,555 questionnaires distributed were completed and returned. The responses were analysed on the Polytechnic's DEC System-10 computer using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Slightly over half of the respondents claimed that they used the library, although there were significant differences between students in different departments and on different types of courses. The study also looked at which library services were used, reasons for non-use, and usage of other libraries.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Part-time students in polytechnics

There is an increasing appreciation among polytechnics of the need to examine more closely the difficulties experienced by part-time students. The reason for this heightened awareness is clear; part-time students now represent a large and growing section of the polytechnic student population. Approximately 40% of all polytechnic students are part-timers and, while first year enrolments for advanced full-time and sandwich courses rose by 1.5% in 1978, enrolments of part-time students rose by 8.6%[1]. Furthermore it seems likely that, with the impact of a decline in full-time student numbers in the 1990s (Department of Education and Science and Scottish Education Department 1978) and the greater emphasis being placed on continuing education (Williams 1977), course provision for part-time students will continue to grow. It is in this context that the Library and Learning Resources Service of the City of London Polytechnic conducted a questionnaire survey in early 1979, aimed at finding out more about the use of the library by part-time students.

1.2 Part-time students and the library

The opportunities for full-time students to make use of the library are generally greater than those of part-time students, who are constrained not only by the limited amount of time which they spend on polytechnic premises and by restrictions on the time available for them to study but also in many cases by the practical nature of their courses which do not require use of a library. Since full-time students will almost inevitably make heavier demands on the service, as a consequence, development of library services has been rather more orientated towards their needs. Indeed, many of the facilities which are offered (e.g. short-loans) are likely to be of little practical use to part-timers. However, there must be some doubt as to whether there would be greater use of the library even if additional facilities were offered to part-time students. Many part-time students are enrolled on vocational courses which tend to rely upon a limited number of prescribed text books.

1. Source: *Committee of Directors of Polytechnics. Annual survey of polytechnic enrolments 1978/79. The distribution of part-time students between polytechnics is not even and, at the City of London Polytechnic for example, 73% of students are on part-time courses.*

With the aid of these, together with lecture notes and handouts, students are unlikely to need to make extensive use of the library.

1.3 Library facilities at the City of London Polytechnic

The City of London Polytechnic is situated on ten sites in and around the City of London. The administrative headquarters, the computer centre and the students' union each occupy one site while the rest of the sites are used predominantly for teaching purposes. Library facilities are available on five sites. These are in order of size:

(1) Moorgate: covering accountancy and taxation, banking and finance, economics, law, insurance, marketing, management, transport, data processing, psychology and sociology of work.

(2) Calcutta House: covering biology, chemistry, data processing, geography, languages, mathematics, physics, politics and government, psychology, secretarial studies, sociology.

(3) Central House: covering art, metallurgy and materials science.

(4) Tower Hill: covering marine and air navigation, maritime studies.

(5) Walburgh House: covering geology.

Students based at Jewry Street site which contains the Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics Departments but which has no library, are serviced by Calcutta House, while the Finsbury Circus site is used exclusively as teaching accommodation for departments based at Moorgate (mainly Transport and Insurance). Table 1 provides an indication of the departments covered by each site library and the number of part-time students in them.

TABLE 1

MAXIMUM USER POPULATION OF PART-TIME STUDENTS FOR EACH SITE LIBRARY 1978/1979[1]

	Departments	Number of Students
Moorgate Library	Accountancy/Taxation	1,103
	Economics and Banking	1,408
	Law	71
	Management	307
	Management Science	7
	Transport and Insurance	2,691
		5,587
Central House Library	Fine Art	996
	Metallurgy and Materials	197
	Silversmithing and Jewellry[2]	1,050
		2,243
Calcutta House Library	Biological Sciences	294
	Chemistry	199
	General Studies	0
	Geography	18
	Mathematics	197
	Modern Languages[3]	887
	Physics	23
	Politics	51
	Psychology	2
	Secretarial Studies	0
	Sociology	16
		1,695
Tower Hill Library	Navigation	807
Walburgh House Library	Geology	8
		10,340

1. Source: City of London Polytechnic (1979). Quinquennial Review for the Council for National Academic Awards. Volume II Appendices. London: City of London Polytechnic. pp. 85-89.

2. Some courses held at Calcutta House.

3. Includes four hundred and six students on lunchtime foreign language courses at Moorgate which are not covered by the statistics in the statistics in the Quinquennial Review.

2. METHODOLOGY

A total of 2,555 questionnaires[1] were distributed during the first week of the Spring term 1979 to a sample of part-time students. The part-time student population was calculated to be 16,260 students. Table 2 provides details of the total number of students in each department and the number of questionnaires distributed. It can be seen that, in those departments where part-time students were poorly represented, questionnaires were distributed to a large proportion of the departmental population (or even all) but, on average, they were only given to about 16% of the total population. However, figures on student numbers can be rather misleading unless an explanation of how they were derived is given as well.

The totals in Table 2 are based on a count of names in the Polytechnic's class registers and, for this survey, multiple counting was necessary if a student was enrolled in more than one class. The actual number of students enrolled is therefore much lower. In addition, student enrolment figures give an inflated impression of the size of the population because there is almost inevitably a substantial number of students who cease to attend classes before the course is completed. This wastage rate is difficult to determine during the course of an academic year and calculating average attendances over the Autumn and Spring terms might be a more reliable means of obtaining an accurate assessment of the size of the student population at the time of the study. Calculations of average attendances for selected classes suggested that it was not uncommon for attendances to be less than half the level of enrolments.

Where selection of students within departments was carried out, lecturers were asked to give a copy of the questionnaire to every tenth person (i.e. 1st, 11th, 21st) in their class list.[2] If that particular student was not present at the class, lecturers were requested to give the questionnaire (and covering letter) to the next student listed. In addition, all students undertaking research degrees were sent the questionnaire.

1. *A copy of the questionnaire and covering letter are included as Appendix I.*

2. *A copy of the letter to lecturers asking them to distribute the questionnaire is included as Appendix II.*

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRES BY DEPARTMENT AND RESPONSE RATES

Department	Students	Questionn-aires distributed	Questionn-aires returned	% of distributed
Accountancy	2,790	333	99	30
Economics and Banking	2,824	340	107	31
Law	61	61	10	16
Management	717	86	21	24
Modern Languages	669	88	25	28
Politics	47	47	9	19
Secretarial	0	0	-	-
Sociology	1	1	0	0
Transport and Insurance	4,649	566	148	26
Biology	161	78	24	31
Chemistry	6	6	0	0
Geography	13	13	4	31
Geology	2	2	1	50
Mathematics	14	14	6	43
Metallurgy	150	74	15	20
Physics	12	12	0	0
Psychology	1	1	1	100
Navigation	377	46	27	59
Art	3,766	787	166	21
	16,260	2,555	663	26

3. RESULTS

3.1 Response rate

Only 26% of the questionnaires sent out were completed and returned. A number of explanations can be put forward for this disappointingly low response rate. First, some lecturers may have failed to distribute the questionnaire to their students. Secondly, some students may have had difficulties in returning the questionnaires as they were only on polytechnic premises for a short period of time. Thirdly, as there was some duplication in membership of classes, it is probable that some students received two or more questionnaires. Although they were specifically asked to complete and return all the questionnaires received, some students may have felt that it was not worthwhile to do so. Indeed, if this was taken further it could be suggested that low response in general was a measure of low usage or non-use, since it is reasonable to suppose that frequent users will feel more motivated to complete the questionnaires then infrequent users or non-users. It is for this reason that the results of the survey should be seen as being indicative of patterns of use rather than as absolute measures.

3.2 Characteristics of respondents

Given that approximately 58% of all part-time students at the Polytechnic are taught at the Moorgate site, it was not surprising to find that the largest proportion of respondents was also from this site (61%)[1]. As Table 3 shows, a further quarter of the respondents were taught at the Central House site and the reminder were divided between the other four sites. The vast majority of respondents attended classes during the early part of the week (see Table 4) and they were almost evenly divided between those attending after about 5.30 p.m. (see Table 5).

1. *Including, in both cases, Finsbury Circus which is used entirely as teaching accommodation by departments at Moorgate.*

TABLE 3

SITE AT WHICH RESPONDENTS WERE TAUGHT

Site at which taught	% of respondents	% of all p/t students
Moorgate) Finsbury Circus)	61	58
Central House	25	22
Calcutta House	9	8
Tower Hill	4	8
Jewry Street	1	4
Walburgh House	<1	<1

TABLE 4

DAY OF WEEK ON WHICH RESPONDENTS ATTENDED CLASSES

Day of week	N	% of all respondents
Monday	178	28.1
Tuesday	162	25.6
Wednesday	155	24.5
Thursday	87	13.7
Friday	43	6.8
Saturday	8	1.3

TABLE 5

TIME AT WHICH RESPONDENTS ATTENDED CLASSES

Time at which class starts		N	% of all respondents
9.00 - 10.00		90	14.3
10.00 - 11.00	Morning	43	6.8
11.00 - 12.00		20	3.2
12.00 - 1.00		1	0.2
1.00 - 2.00		55	8.9
2.00 - 3.00	Afternoon	40	6.4
3.00 - 4.00		30	4.7
4.00 - 5.00		3	0.5
5.00 - 6.00		78	12.3
6.00 - 7.00	Evening	231	36.5
7.00 - 8.00		39	6.2

Disregarding those departments where only a handful of questionnaires were distributed, the response rate for individual departments varied little from the average (see Table 6). Notable exceptions to this trend, however, were the Navigation Department and, to a lesser extent, the Mathematics Department, where the response rates were much higher than average and the Law and Politics Departments where the response rates were somewhat lower than other departments.

TABLE 6

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE RATE BY DEPARTMENT

Department	No. of questionnaires distributed	No. of questionnaires returned	% response rate
Accountancy	333	99	30
Art	787	166	21
Biology	78	24	31
Chemistry	6	0	0
Economics and Banking	340	107	31
Geography	13	4	31
Geology	2	1	50
Law	61	10	16
Management	86	21	24
Mathematics	14	6	43
Metallurgy	74	15	20
Modern Languages	88	25	28
Navigation	46	27	59
Physics	12	0	0
Politics	47	9	19
Psychology	1	1	100
Sociology	1	0	0
Transport and Insurance	566	148	26
	2,555	663	26

3.3 Use of the library

Slightly under half of the respondents indicated that they did not currently use the library. However, if these students, who failed to reply to the question on whether they used the library, are excluded from the analysis, the proportion rises to approximately 52% compared to about 48% who did use it. In the absence of comparable figures from other similar institutions, it is very difficult to assess whether or not the proportion using the library can be considered to be high.

Even comparisons of this kind could be misleading. Since course requirements are clearly going to be a factor affecting the extent of use of the library by part-time students, the type of courses offered within different institutions will determine the optimum usage of the library achievable through measures which can be taken by the library itself.

3.3.1 Use of the library by department

There were considerable variations in the use of the library by part-time students in different departments (see Table 7). At the lower end of the usage spectrum were the Modern Languages students (12%), the Transport and Insurance students (29%), and the Economics and Banking students (30%). In comparison, at the higher end of the spectrum, were the Politics students (100%)[1], the Metallurgy students (80%)[1], the Biology students (75%) and the Navigation students (67%). The differences are obviously related to the nature of courses offered by the various departments.

3.3.2 Use of the library by type of course

Part-time courses were divided into the following five categories in an attempt to determine whether types of courses (and hence course requirements) influence students' use of the library:

(1) Degree: including both C.N.A.A. first and higher degrees (although in practice primarily restricted to the latter).

(2) HNC (Higher National Certificate) and DMS (Diploma in Management Studies): externally validated vocationally orientated courses.

(3) Polytechnic Diplomas: internally validated courses.

(4) Professional: courses leading to qualifications of professional bodies.

(5) Other: courses not leading to recognised qualifications.

1. *Proportion based on a very small sample.*

TABLE 7

EXTENT OF USE OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY
ACCORDING TO DEPARTMENT

Department	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No		No Response		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Accountancy	44	(44)	55	(56)	0	(0)	99
Art/Silversmithing	102	(61)	48	(29)	16	(10)	166
Biology	18	(75)	6	(25)	0	(0)	24
Economics and Banking	32	(30)	72	(67)	3	(3)	107
Geography	1	(25)	3	(75)	0	(0)	4
Geology	0	(0)	1	(100)	0	(0)	1
Law	8	(80)	2	(20)	0	(0)	10
Management	10	(48)	7	(33)	4	(19)	21
Mathematics	2	(33)	4	(67)	0	(0)	6
Metallurgy	12	(80)	3	(20)	0	(0)	15
Modern Languages	3	(12)	21	(84)	1	(4)	25
Navigation	18	(67)	9	(33)	0	(0)	27
Politics	9	(100)	0	(0)	0	(0)	9
Psychology	1	(100)	0	(0)	0	(0)	1
Transport and Insurance	43	(29)	99	(67)	6	(4)	148

Chi-square = 132.87, df = 28, $p < 0.01$

While it was not particularly unexpected that students on degree courses or undertaking research degrees exhibited the highest level of use, it was perhaps a little surprising that a relatively large proportion of students on courses not leading to recognised qualifications were also users (see Table 8). In addition it was interesting that there was a higher level of use of the library by those students on polytechnic diploma courses compared to those on professional courses which are externally validated or examined.

TABLE 8

EXTENT OF USE OF THE POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY

ACCORDING TO TYPE OF COURSE

Type of Course	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No		Not specified	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Degree	39	(70)	16	(29)	1	(2)
HNC/DMS	5	(39)	7	(54)	1	(8)
Polytechnic Diplomas	27	(49)	27	(49)	1	(2)
Professional	131	(36)	221	(61)	12	(3)
Other	101	(58)	59	(34)	15	(9)

Chi-square = 59.93, df = 8, p = <.001

3.3.3 Use of the library by grade of course

Part-time courses were then recorded by level according to the Burnham classification of further education courses. The five grades used were as follows[1]:

I Courses above first degree and research training.

II Study above Ordinary National Certificate or equivalent standard leading directly to a university degree or equivalent qualification.

III Study of equivalent standard to that in category II but not necessarily leading to qualifications mentioned in that category.

IV Study or courses above the Ordinary level of the General Certificate of Education or Ordinary grade of the Scottish Certificate of Education or comparable level leading directly to the Ordinary National Certificate or courses of a comparable standard.

V Courses other than those listed.

1. Source: *Report of the Committee into Pay of Non-University Teachers (Chairman: Rt. Hon. Lord Houghton of Sowerby). London: HMSO, 1974. (Cmnd. 5848). According to the Burnham Grading of Courses Committee, Grades II and III are shortly to be merged.*

In practice, some courses are classified with a combination of two of the Burnham grades. At City of London Polytechnic, these courses are almost all in the subject areas of art and silversmithing, with the art courses being Burnham III/IV and the silversmithing courses being Burnham IV/V. As Table 9 illustrates, students on courses with those gradings use the library to a greater extent then students on Burnham II courses. Otherwise, the level of the course is strongly correlated with the use of the library, ranging from 71% usage for Burnham I to 29% usage for Burnham IV.[1]

TABLE 9

EXTENT OF USE OF THE POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY
BY BURNHAM GRADE OF COURSE

Burnham Grade	Use of the polytechnic library: Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
I	36	(71)	15	(29)
II	34	(49)	36	(51)
III	104	(40)	154	(60)
IV	16	(29)	39	(71)
V	3	(43)	4	(57)
III/IV	64	(63)	37	(37)
IV/V	46	(51)	45	(50)

Chi-square = 34.29, df = 6, p = <.001

1. The sample for Burnham V is too small to draw any inferences.

3.3.4 Use of the library by site

The site at which classes were taught had a very significant effect on the extent to which the library was used (see Table 10). Interestingly, it was the sites which are serviced by two of the small libraries that had the highest levels of use (Central House 65%, Tower Hill 69%), even though they have shorter evening opening hours than the larger site libraries.[1] Moorgate, which has the largest site library, had the lowest level of usage from part-time students attending classes there (35%). Indeed Moorgate seems to have a level of usage by part-time students which is not dissimilar to those sites which have the impediment of not having libraries of their own.[2] While, clearly, the distribution of departments between sites and the nature of courses offered by them are probably determining factors in the extent of use of site libraries, it is tempting to suggest that the more impersonal service, which the larger site libraries are forced through necessity to provide, deters use.

3.3.5 Use of the library by day of the class

Students attending classes on Mondays and Tuesdays are less likely to use the library than those with classes on Wednesdays (see Table 11). Interestingly, Pritchard and Auckland (1974) also found a greater use of libraries by part-time students on Wednesdays. However, the earlier study also identified a lower use of libraries on Fridays, compared to other days of the week in contrast to the greater use identified in this study. These findings are not necessarily inconsistent as students attending classes on Fridays may use the library on other days of the week.

1. *Pritchard and Auckland (1974) found that there was much greater use of the library by part-time students in the evening.*

2. *Students at Finsbury Circus use the library at Moorgate while those at Jewry Street use Calcutta House.*

TABLE 10

EXTENT OF USE OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY
ACCORDING TO LOCATION OF CLASS

Building	Use of Polytechnic library: Yes		No		No response		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Calcutta House	34	(57)	25	(42)	1	(2)	60
Central House	107	(65)	42	(26)	16	(10)	165
Finsbury Circus	22	(34)	38	(59)	4	(6)	64
Jewry Street	2	(33)	4	(66)	0	(0)	6
Moorgate	117	(35)	211	(63)	9	(3)	337
Navigation	20	(69)	9	(31)	0	(0)	29
Walburgh House	0	(0)	1	(100)	0	(0)	1
No respcnse	1	(100)	0	(0)	0	(0)	1

Chi-square = 81.87, df = 14, $p < 0.01$

TABLE 11

EXTENT OF USE OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY
ACCORDING TO DAY OF CLASS

Day of class	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No		No response		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Monday	70	(39)	97	(55)	11	(6)	178
Tuesday	63	(39)	91	(56)	8	(5)	162
Wednesday	87	(56)	66	(43)	2	(1)	155
Thursday	39	(45)	45	(52)	3	(3)	87
Friday	26	(61)	16	(37)	1	(2)	43
Saturday	3	(38)	5	(63)	0	(0)	8
No response	15	(50)	10	(33)	5	(17)	30

Chi-square = 31.82, df = 12, $p < 0.01$

3.3.6 Use of the library by time of class

As Table 12 shows, part-time students who attended classes during the day (i.e. starting before 5.00 p.m.) were much more likely to currently use the library than those with classes in the evening (i.e. starting after 5.00 p.m.). Clearly, one factor behind this lower usage during the evening is simply that the availability of library services is circumscribed by the time at which the various site libraries close and by the student charactersitics of a very limited time before class and a desire to get home afterwards.

TABLE 12

EXTENT OF USE OF THE POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY
BY DAY STUDENTS AND EVENING STUDENTS

Time	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Day	161	(58)	116	(42)
Evening	127	(39)	203	(62)
Not specified	15	(58)	11	(42)

Chi-square = 24.32, df = 2, $p = < .001$

3.3.7 Use of the library according to whether student travels from home, work or elsewhere

It was much more likely that students, who travelled to classes from home, currently used the library than those who travelled from their place of work (see Table 13). Approximately 56% of those responding indicated that they travelled to the polytechnic from work. Only a very small minority of students travelled to the polytechnic from other than work or home.

TABLE 13

USE OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY ACCORDING TO WHETHER STUDENT TRAVELS FROM HOME, WORK OR ELSEWHERE [1]

	Use of polytechnic library				No response		Total
	Yes		No				
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Travel from home	178	(65)	91	(33)	5	(2)	274
Travel from work	133	(36)	232	(62)	7	(2)	372
Travel from elsewhere	8	(62)	5	(39)	0	(0)	13

3.3.8 Use of the library and length of travelling time

There was a clear relationship between the length of students travelling time to classes and their use of the library (see Table 14). While only 23% of students with a travelling time of less than half-an-hour used the library, 63% of those with a travelling time of over two hours did so.

3.3.9 Use of the library and length of time in the polytechnic prior to the class

The proportion of students who currently used the library increased according to the length of time they spent on polytechnic premises prior to their classes (see Table 14). Only 37% of part-time students, who were in the polytechnic for less than half-an-hour before the class used the library. In comparison, 74% of students who were in the polytechnic for between one and two hours, used it. The precise cause and effect relationship here is difficult to determine and it could, of course, be the case that users of the library arrive earlier for their classes so that they can visit the library beforehand.

1. *Some respondents indicated that they travelled to the polytechnic from more than one of these places.*

TABLE 14

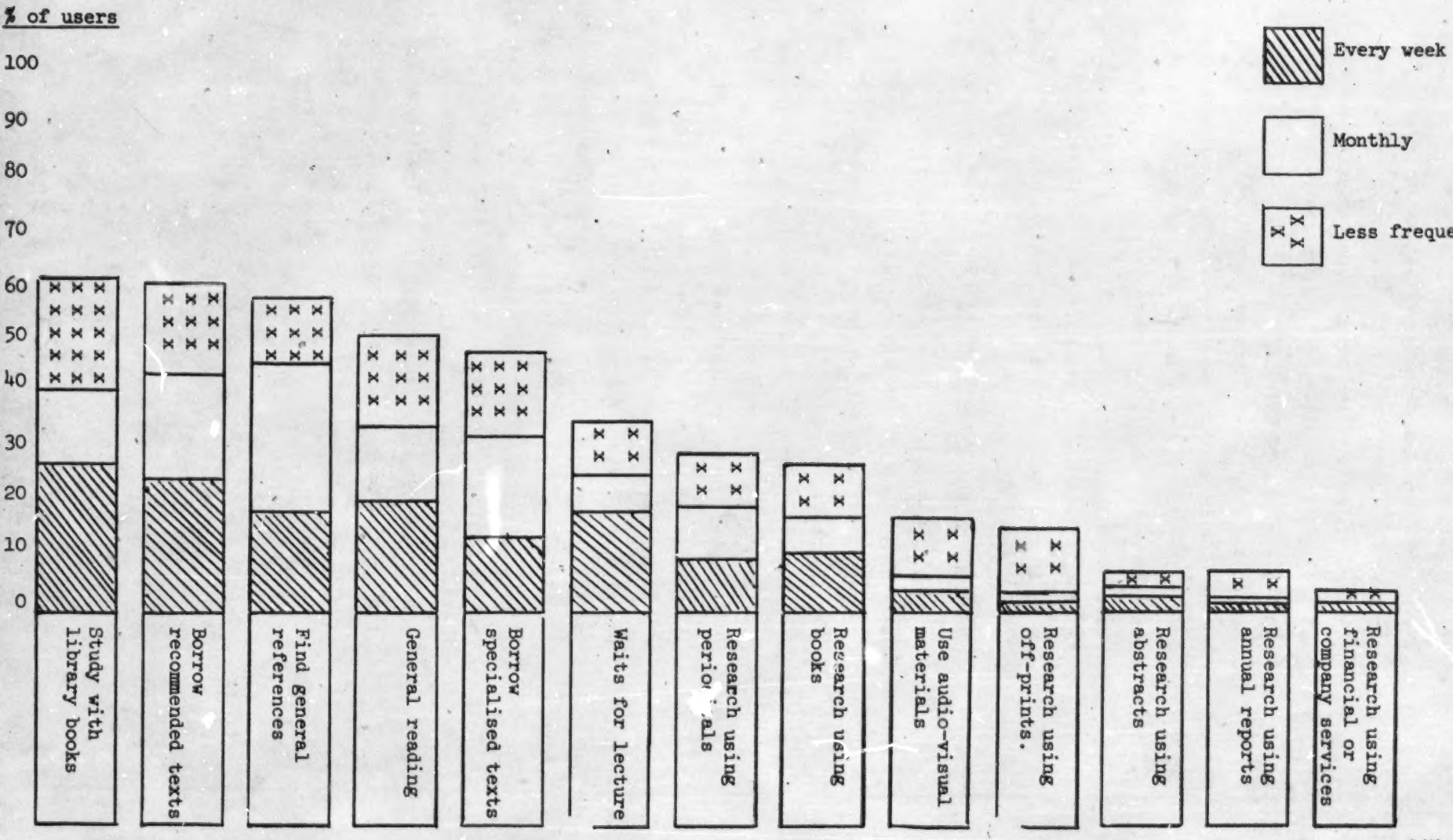
USE OF POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY ACCORDING TO
(1) LENGTH OF TRAVELLING TIME AND
(2) LENGTH OF TIME IN POLYTECHNIC BEFORE CLASS

Length of time	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No		No response		Total
Travelling time	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<½ hour	41	(23)	135	(76)	3	(2)	177
½-1 hour	124	(54)	100	(43)	6	(3)	230
1-2 hours	112	(59)	73	(38)	5	(3)	190
<2 hours	17	(63)	10	(37)	0	(0)	27
No response	9	(23)	12	(31)	18	(46)	39
Time in polytechnic							
<½ hour	53	(37)	91	(63)	1	(1)	145
½-1 hour	64	(59)	41	(38)	3	(3)	108
1-2 hours	32	(74)	9	(21)	2	(5)	43
<2 hours	23	(85)	4	(15)	0	(0)	27
No response	130	(38)	185	(55)	23	(7)	338

3.4 Frequency of use of different library services

Over 60% of the part-time students, who had indicated that they currently used the library, revealed that they used it for studying with library books (See Figure 1). About half of them used the library frequently for this purpose (i.e. every week). This would suggest a high level of "in-house" use of library books by part-time students. However, a similar proportion of those who currently used the library, used it for borrowing recommended texts. The other main uses indicated by users were finding general references (59%), general reading (52%), and borrowing specialised texts (49%). The library was little used by part-time students for long term research projects using materials other than periodicals and books or for using audio-visual materials.

FIGURE 1 FREQUENCY OF USE OF DIFFERENT LIBRARY SERVICES BY USERS



There were some interesting variations in frequency of use of different library 'services'. Waiting in the library for a lecture was an activity which users tended to indulge in weekly if they did it at all. On the other hand, finding general references and borrowing specialised texts were undertaken less frequently (monthly or less frequently rather than weekly). However, some caution is necessary when looking at these findings since the relevant question on the questionnaire was enquiring into frequency of use in general terms. It might well be the case (especially with long-term research projects, for example) that the frequency of use may alter throughout the academic year in accordance with course requirements.

3.5 Additional services desired by users

Students, who had indicated that they currently used the library, were asked about their preferences for additional library services. A special textbook collection was favoured by over a third of respondents (see Table 15), reflecting, possibly, the heavy dependence of part-time courses on prescribed textbooks and the difficulties faced by students in obtaining them. A sizeable minority of users favoured some kind of instruction in using the library (15%) and a higher proportion were specifically interested in search skills instruction (22%). The provision of an enquiry service was supported by 17% of users but it was beyond the scope of the survey to probe into the type of service envisaged by users. Significantly, in the space allowed for users to suggest other desired services, 9% of respondents mentioned providing more stock and 6% wanted better availability. Although these are not really additional services, it again might suggest that part-time students are encountering difficulties in obtaining the books they require for their courses from the library

TABLE 15

ADDITIONAL SERVICES DESIRED BY PART-TIME STUDENTS WHO USE THE LIBRARY

Additional service	Number of users	% of all users
Special textbook collection	104	34
Provide search skills instruction	67	22
Provide enquiry service	52	17
Provide instruction in library use	45	15
Provide more stock	28	9
Better availability	17	6
Other	31	10

N = 303

3.6 Reasons for non-use of the library by part-time students

Lack of time was mentioned by well over a half of non-users as a reason for not using the library (see Table 16). Orton and Wiseman (1977) also identified the importance of time pressures as a barrier to library use by part-time students in a report of two surveys carried out in Canada. As they point out, "this is an obvious problem, given the fact that many part-time students are married, have families, and are working full-time". The other major reasons for non-use were given as a need to only use one's own textbooks (46%) and use of other libraries (23%).

3.6.1 Reasons for non-use by department

Very great differences were revealed between students in the various departments in their reasons for non-use of the polytechnic library. However, in view of the small sample sizes of this level of analysis, the findings need to be be interpretated with care.

TABLE 16

REASONS FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS
NOT USING THE LIBRARY

Reason for non-use	Number of non-users	% of all non-users
No time	187	57
Only need own textbooks	151	46
Use other library	77	23
Unaware of existence of library	12	4
Library not open	9	3
Other	26	8

N = 330

Although lack of time was an important factor for students in most departments (other than Geography, Metallurgy and Navigation), the proportion of students giving this reason varied markedly between them (see Table 17). While more than 70% of students in the Modern Languages, Mathematics and Accountancy departments indicated lack of time as a reason for non-use, the proportion was nearer 45% with students in the Economics and Banking and the Management departments. Furthermore, in some cases, the ownership by students of their own texts was more frequently given as an explanation for non-use than lack of time (e.g. in Economics and Banking, Management, Mathematics and Metallurgy) or, even, use of another library (e.g. Geography, Law and Management departments).

Thirteen students indicated that they were unaware of the existence of the library. They were drawn from four departments: Transport and Insurance (6 students), Art (3 students), Economics and Banking (3 students) and Modern Languages (1 student).

Opening hours were not generally seen as an impediment to the use of the library. However, art students were an exception to this pattern and 15% of non-users giving this as a reason for not using the library. The fact that Central House is the only building which offers courses on a Saturday when the library is closed must be the major reason for this but it also seems likely that the shorter evening hours at the Central House site library is at least the partial explanation for this deviation from the norm.

TABLE 17

REASON FOR NON-USE OF THE LIBRARY BY DEPARTMENT

Department	No. not using library	Reasons for non-use[1] No time	Own texts	Use another library	Unaware of existence	Not Open	Other
	N	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Accountancy	55	43(78)	31(56)	11(20)	0(0)	0(0)	4(7)
Economics & Banking	72	33(46)	42(58)	18(25)	3(4)	2(3)	7(10)
Law	2	1(50)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Management	7	3(43)	4(57)	5(71)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Modern Language	21	15(71)	13(62)	0(0)	1(5)	0(0)	1(5)
Transport	99	61(62)	44(44)	19(19)	6(6)	0(0)	11(11)
Biology	6	3(50)	1(17)	3(50)	0(0)	0(0)	1(17)
Geography	3	0(0)	0(0)	2(67)	0(0)	0(0)	1(33)
Geology	1	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1(100)
Mathematics	4	3(75)	4(100)	2(50)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Metallurgy	3	0(0)	3(100)	3(100)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Navigation	9	2(22)	6(67)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	3(33)
Art	48	33(69)	11(23)	14(29)	3(6)	7(15)	2(4)

1. *Percentage totals for rows do not add up to 100% because more than one reason for non-use was often given.*

3.7 Use of other libraries by part-time students

3.7.1 Perhaps rather surprisingly, slightly more respondents overall indicated that they used public libraries then the polytechnic library. However, generally, students who used the polytechnic library also tended to use other types of libraries (see Table 18), suggesting, perhaps that some courses are more dependent on library facilities than others. Only users of firm and society libraries did not conform to this trend; slightly more users of firm libraries and only slightly fewer users of society libraries did not use the Polytechnic library then did.

TABLE 18

USE BY PART-TIME STUDENTS OF OTHER LIBRARIES FOR COURSE WORK

Use of other libraries	Use of polytechnic library: Yes		No		No response		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Public libraries	187	(60)	120	(39)	4	(1)	311
Firm libraries	54	(46)	61	(52)	3	(3)	118
Society libraries	54	(49)	52	(47)	4	(4)	110
Other College libraries	37	(67)	17	(31)	1	(2)	55
Other	13	(81)	3	(19)	0	(0)	16

3.7.2 Use of other libraries by department

There were marked differences by department in the extent of use by part-time students of public libraries compared to their use of the polytechnic library (see Table 19). Accountancy and transport students in particular were rather more inclined to use public libraries than the polytechnic library while only half the number of navigation students used public libraries as used the polytechnic library.

BLE 19

USE OF OTHER LIBRARIES BY DEPARTMENT

	Department												
	Acc.	Art.	Biol.	Ec./ Bank.	Law.	Mang. mt.	Metall.	Mod. Lang.	Nav.	Polit- ics	Trans- port	Other	N (= 100)
students using Polytechnic library	15	34	6	11	3	3	4	1	6	3	14	1	303
students using other libraries													
Public	19	32	4	11	2	4	3	2	3	3	17	1	311
Firm	11	9	13	25	3	3	8	0	2	3	23	0	118
Society	16	7	5	20	5	4	3	2	3	3	32	3	110
Other college	7	31	11	7	6	0	7	2	4	9	7	9	55

Other interesting points to come from the analysis were that:

(a) art students were very prolific users of all types of library (other than libraries at work and those run by professional societies),

(b) transport students did not tend to use either public libraries or the polytechnic library very heavily but were more likely to use society libraries than other students,

(c) similarly, economics students were inclined to use libraries at work rather than public libraries or the polytechnic library,

(d) biology and metallurgy students were heavy users of all types of libraries, but especially libraries at work, and

(e) modern language students did not tend to use libraries at all.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The overall results as presented have not provided any startling new insights into the behaviour of part-time students, although the fact that virtually one half of the respondents claimed to use the library was a surprisingly high percentage. In view of the the relatively low response rate, especially, we would not claim to have done very much more than provided some interesting, indicative tables which have quantified and to some extent proved hypotheses. These hypotheses, although not formally stated, relate to ideas that we felt to be true e.g. that certain types of courses would by their very nature result in low library use. It is felt that the results may provide some help to other institutions who face similar problems.

4.2 The results of the work done were reported in abbreviated form to the Library and Learning Resources (Policy and Budgetary) Committee who agreed with the recommendation that an initial sum of £1,000 should be made available for the purchase of textbooks for part-time students in the Accountancy and Taxation Department. At the same time, they asked that a follow-up survey be carried out to determine the impact of the purchases.

4.3 The follow up survey will consist of two sections:

(a) a study of all part-time students in two departments: Accountancy and Taxation and Economics and Banking. The latter is similar in size and other characteristics to Accountancy and will act as a control group.

(b) a study of the use of books that were bought, together with the use of any copies of the same titles which were already in stock. The intention will be to see who uses these books (full or part-time students) and from which departments.

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CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC
LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES SERVICE

QUESTIONNAIRE TO PART-TIME STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

The library offers a service to all students and staff at the Polytechnic. Inevitably, however, as full-time students use the library more extensively, priority does tend to be given to their needs.

This academic year we are trying to improve the services that we offer to part-time staff and students. To do this effectively, however, we would like to have some information on you as a part-time student and about the class(es) which you attend.

PLEASE take a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire. It will help US to help YOU.

Thank you for your co-operation.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Please return the questionnaire through the internal post via the Porters in the Entrance Hall of your building or Libraries to:

Alan Pritchard,
Deputy Librarian,
Calcutta House.

AP/MS
November 1978

CITY OF LONDON POLYTECHNIC
LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES SERVICE

Please do not write in this column

PART-TIME STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

NB The questions relate to classes (e.g. Law within ICA Prof I or Corporate Planning within ICMA Prof III) and NOT courses.
If you should receive more than one questionnaire, it is because you attend more than one class. Please fill in all questionnaires. 1 ____ 4

1. Please give as much detail as possible about your class.

Class ..... 5 ____

Course name ..... 6 ____ 8

Course code (if known) .....

Building ..... 9 ____

Day ..... 10 ____

Time ..... 11 ____ 14

2. Do you currently use the library at all?

Yes ☐ Now please answer questions 3, 4, 6-9 15 ____

No ☐ Now please answer questions 5-9

3. What do you use the library for?

	Every week	Monthly	Less Frequently	Never	
Waiting for lecture	☐	☐	☐	☐	16 ____
Studying with library books	☐	☐	☐	☐	17 ____
Borrowing recommended books	☐	☐	☐	☐	18 ____
Borrowing specialised supplementary books	☐	☐	☐	☐	19 ____
General reading	☐	☐	☐	☐	20 ____
Finding general references to a subject	☐	☐	☐	☐	21 ____
Using audio-visual materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	22 ____

	Every week	Monthly	Less Frequently	Never	Please do not write in this column.
Long term research projects using					
- books	☐	☐	☐	☐	23 ☐
periodicals	☐	☐	☐	☐	24 ☐
abstracting/ indexing services	☐	☐	☐	☐	25 ☐
annual reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	26 ☐
financial/company services	☐	☐	☐	☐	27 ☐
offprints	☐	☐	☐	☐	28 ☐
computer search services	☐	☐	☐	☐	29 ☐

Other (specify) ..... 30 ☐

4. What should the library provide for you, as a part-time student, that it currently does not?

Special text-book collection ☐ 31 ☐

Enquiry service ☐ 32 ☐

Basic library-use instruction ☐ 33 ☐

Information searching skills instruction ☐ 34 ☐

Other, please specify .. .. 35 ☐

.....

Now please answer questions 6-9

5. If you do not use the library, please say why not:

You do not have time ☐ 36 ☐

Your own textbooks are sufficient ☐ 37 ☐

Another library meets your needs ☐ 38 ☐

Other, please specify ..... 39 ☐

.....

Now please answer questions 6-9

Please do not write in this column

6. Do you use (for course work) any other libraries?

Public library	☐	40 ⌴
Library at work	☐	41 ⌴
Professional society or institute	☐	42 ⌴
Another college	☐	43 ⌴
Other, please specify		44 ⌴
.....		

7. Where do you travel from to the Polytechnic?

Home	☐	45 ⌴
Work	☐	46 ⌴
Other	☐	47 ⌴

8. How long is your travel time to the Polytechnic (on average)? ..... hours 48 ⌴⌴⌴ 51

9. How long do you spend in the Polytechnic

Before your class	..... hours	52 ⌴⌴⌴ 55
Afterwards	..... hours	56 ⌴⌴⌴ 59
At any other time	..... hours/week	60 ⌴⌴⌴ 63

Thank you for your your co-operation.

Please hand this questionnaire to the Porters in the Entrance Hall of your building or to a library by 31ST JANUARY 1979.

Alan Pritchard,
Deputy Librarian,
Calcutta House.

AP/MS
November 1978

APPENDIX II

CITY OF
LONDON
POLYTECHNIC
Provost
Arthur Suddaby MSc PhD ARIC CEng MIChemE

Library and Learning
Resources Service
Calcutta House Precinct
Old Castle Street
London
E1 7NT
Telephone 01-283 1030

AP/MS

December 1978

Dear Lecturer,

You may already be aware that the Library is attempting to survey the needs of part-time students. I would be most grateful if you could help me by distributing the enclosed questionnaires:

* (a) to all students in your class.

* (b) to the students in the class register whose names appear on the top-right hand corners of the questionnaire. Should that student not be present on this occasion could you give it to the next student listed in the register.

The questionnaires can be handed in at a library or to the porters in the Entrance Hall of your building. They should be returned as soon as possible and certainly not later than 31 JANUARY 1979.

Very many thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Pritchard

Alan Pritchard
Deputy Chief Librarian

Encs.

DATA PROCESSING

1. As can be seen from Appendix I, the questionnaires had punching guides on them. These were coded upon return and sent across for punching to the Computer Service where they were entered directly into a disc file in the library user area.

2. Processing of the data was carried out by means of SPSS on the Polytechnic's DEC System-10.

3. A copy of the code book, the raw data and the SPSS programs has been deposited with the Centre for Research into User Studies, University of Sheffield.